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E.O. 12958: DECL: CLOSURE OF ICTY
TAGS: ICTY PREL PROG PHUM SR
SUBJECT: ICTY ACTION PLAN UPDATE #5; SEPTEMBER 27, 2006

REF: (A) BELGRADE 1547 (B) BELGRADE 1371 AND PREVIOUS

Classified By: Ambassador Michael C. Polt, reasons 1.4 (b,c,d)

¶1. (U) This is the most recent in our weekly reports on GOS efforts on the Mladic Action Plan. Last week's report was included in reftel (a), the reporting cable of Ambassador Williamson's (S/WCI) visit to Belgrade 12-14 September and our subsequent discussion with Ljajic on the 15th. Prior reports in reftel (b). This report covers the period from 18-22 September.

¶2. (S) Summary: ICTY Action Plan co-coordinator Rasim Ljajic had very little to report in this week's (18-22 September) review of Action Plan developments. He confirmed that co-coordinator Vukcevic had sent the latest progress report to ICTY earlier this week and engaged in a "disappointing" DVC with Carla Del Ponte on September 21; he pledged that the pending law providing access to intel reports and jurisdiction regarding the activities of the Mladic support network would be passed next week; and he referred to the latest leads in the surveillance operation of suspected Mladic supporters. End Summary.

¶3. (S) Ljajic expressed frustration with Del Ponte's critical comments during the September 21 DVC. Del Ponte, he said, seems to have now adopted a uniformly negative view of Belgrade's efforts. She told Vukcevic that he was not sufficiently involved in the effort and that she was dissatisfied with results. Ljajic echoed his comments to us last week, complaining about Del Ponte's "mixed messages" and observing that it was unrealistic to expect either Coordinator to be as involved operationally as she now seemed to suggest. Ljajic said that Del Ponte seems to have fixed on references in the interrogation reports which had Pavkovic remarking that "if you want information about Mladic you should ask VBA head Kovac; he knows everything." According to Ljajic, Del Ponte told them in the DVC that she was sure Kovac had all the answers.

¶4. (S) Ljajic said that Vukcevic's latest report had been transmitted to The Hague earlier in the week, but played down its significance. It recounted details of interviews and surveillance reports which only reflected Belgrade's long shot approach: pursue small fish in the network in the hope of inadvertently netting a big catch. Ljajic said that

Tolimir's wife had showed up at the VMA, apparently trying to link up with a cousin who had checked out earlier in the morning. She had been able to evade her handlers for several minutes and may have been able to exchange information with several Doctors. There were strong indications that Tolimir was quite ill and was in need of critical medical attention. Ljajic also noted that Jogo had sent a threatening letter to Kovac's deputy warning him to back off.

15. (S) Ljajic said that he expected the draft law that would provide access to files on the activity of the support network, the same law that would give Vukcevic jurisdiction over accomplices aiding and abetting fugitives, to be adopted by parliament the week of September 25. He noted that the law will likely allow the government to prosecute Lugonja, who had been under surveillance for some time.

(Note: Lugonja's arrest was reported in the press on 9/22; Ljajic says he was immediately taken custody at the airport before departing Serbia.) Ljajic noted that Zarko Stojanovic, a military policeman shown saluting a picture of Mladic earlier in the week in the Belgrade daily Glas, had been suspended without pay. He played down press reports that there were leads about PFWC Hadjic's whereabouts.

POLT